

APPENDIX A

The abstract paragraph beginning at page 32, line 2 has been amended as follows:

An absorbent garment [comprises] includes a body panel and an absorbent composite having a longitudinally extending length and a laterally extending width and [comprising] a backsheet, a topsheet and a retention portion disposed between the backsheet and the topsheet. The absorbent composite is connected to the body panel and [comprises] includes a side margin that is not attached to the body panel and that extends laterally outboard and terminates in a free edge. Preferably, the absorbent composite includes laterally opposing side margins. A method for using the absorbent garment also is provided.

The paragraph beginning at page 3, line 5 has been amended as follows:

FIGURE 1 is a plan view of a first embodiment of an absorbent garment taken from the bodyside thereof with a portion of the garment partially cut away.

The paragraph beginning at page 3, line 13 has been amended as follows:

FIGURE 5 is a plan view of a second embodiment of an absorbent garment taken from the bodyside thereof with a portion of the garment partially cut away.

The paragraph beginning at page 3, line 21 has been amended as follows:

FIGURE 9 is a plan view of a third embodiment of an absorbent garment taken from the bodyside thereof with a portion of the garment partially cut away.

The paragraph beginning at page 3, line 29 has been amended as follows:

FIGURE 13 is a plan view of a fourth embodiment of an absorbent garment taken from the bodyside thereof with a portion of the garment partially cut away.

The paragraph beginning at page 4, line 7 has been amended as follows:

FIGURE 17 is a plan view of a fifth embodiment of an absorbent garment taken from the bodyside thereof with a portion of the garment partially cut away.

The paragraph beginning at page 4, line 15 has been amended as follows:

FIGURE 21 is a plan view of a sixth embodiment of an absorbent garment taken from the bodyside thereof with a portion of the garment partially cut away.

The paragraph beginning at page 4, line 23 has been amended as follows:

FIGURE 25 is a plan view of a [sixth] seventh embodiment of an absorbent garment taken from the bodyside thereof with a portion of the garment partially cut away.

The paragraph beginning at page 5, line 26 has been amended as follows:

Referring to FIGS. 1, 3, 4, 5, 9, 13 and 17, an absorbent garment **2** includes a first, front body panel **4** and a second, rear body panel **6**. The first and second body panels each have an inner, bodyside surface **10** an outer, garment side surface **12** and a length, which is less the overall length of the absorbent garment. Each of the first and second body panels has a first and second longitudinally opposed

terminal end edges **16, 14, 20, 18**, and outer side edges, including a tapered edge **22, 26** and an outboard edge **24, 28** formed along the outer periphery of laterally opposed ear portions **30, 32**. The first terminal edges **14, 16** of the first and second body panels are longitudinally spaced to form an opening **34** therebetween in the crotch region of the garment, while the second terminal edges **20, 18** of the first and second body panels form front and back waist edges respectively. A plurality, meaning two or more, of laterally extending elastic elements **36** can be secured to each of the first and second body panels. Likewise, one or more leg elastic elements **38** can be secured along the tapered side edge of the body panels to form a gasket with the leg of the user. For example, as shown in FIGS. 1-4, each panel can be made of an elasticized composite panel material comprising two non-woven substrates **40** with the plurality of elastic strands **38, 36** sandwiched therebetween. The elastic strands are positioned in the waist regions and along the leg perimeters. A portion of the leg elastic elements **38** can extend under a side margin of an absorbent composite **50**. The placement of the panel leg elastic elements further inward along the side edge provides for improved fit and performance of the garment.

The paragraph beginning at page 7, line 1 has been amended as follows:

Referring to FIGS. 1, 5, 9, 13, 17 and 21, fastening tabs **42** are attached and extend laterally from the outboard edge **28, 190** of the rear body panels from an attachment location **45**. It should be understood that the fastening tabs could be affixed to the front body panels or to both the front and rear body panels. For the purposes of illustration, the right side tab **42** is shown as being folded in during manufacture, while the left side tab **42** is shown as being extended outboard during use. The fastening tabs can be made of a hook and loop combination, such as a [VELCRO]Velcro® fastening system, or can have adhesive or other bonding agents

applied to one surface thereof. As shown in FIG. 1, the tab **42** can include one or more attachment pads **43**. Alternatively, the fastening tabs can include buttons, snaps, ties or other known fastening devices. The tabs can be secured to the body panel with adhesive bonds, sonic bonds, thermal bonds, pinning, stitching or other known types of attachment.

The paragraph beginning at page 12, line 5 has been amended as follows:

In other alternative constructions, the backsheet can comprise a woven or nonwoven fibrous web layer, which is treated or constructed, partially or wholly, to impart the desired levels of liquid impermeability to selected regions that are adjacent to or proximate the absorbent retention portion. For example, the backsheet may include a gas-permeable, nonwoven fabric layer laminated to a polymer film layer which may or may not be gas-permeable. Other examples of fibrous, cloth-like backsheet materials can comprise a stretch thinned or stretch thermal laminate material composed of a 0.6 mil (0.015 mm) thick polypropylene cast film and a 0.7 ounce per square yard (23.8 gsm) polypropylene spunbond material (2 denier fibers). A material of this type has been employed to form the outercover of a [HUGGIES]Huggies® Ultratrim Disposable Diaper, which has been commercially available from Kimberly-Clark Corporation. The backsheet **68** typically provides the outercover of the article. Optionally, however, the article may include a separate outercover component member which is additional to the backsheet. The outercover can be joined, for example, to one or more of the absorbent composite and/or body panels.

The paragraph beginning at page 19, line 28 has been amended as follows:

In a second embodiment shown in FIG. 5-8, one or more elastic elements **92**, shown as there, are secured in the side margins [**84, 86**] **80,82** between the topsheet

and backsheet, and extend longitudinally along a portion of the side margins on each side of the absorbent composite. Preferably, the elastic elements extend along the side margins of the absorbent composite between the body panels and overlap a portion of each body panel 4, 6. The length of the elastic elements is preferably between about 5% and 100% of the length of the absorbent composite. The function of the elastic elements in the side margins of the absorbent composite are to shorten the length of the side margin which pulls the side margins inwardly to form a three-dimensional profile. The elastic elements can be positioned at various laterally spaced positions, depending on the amount of shortening and upward lift desired. The elastic elements can be made of ribbon, films, sprays of elastic, or other elastic configurations known in the art. It should be understood that elastic elements can be incorporated into any of the other side margin configurations described herein.

Claims 2-46 have been amended as follows:

2. (Amended) The [invention] absorbent garment of claim 1 wherein said absorbent composite comprises a first and second longitudinally opposed end regions, and wherein said body panel comprises a first body panel connected to said first end region and a second body panel connected to said second end region, wherein said first and second body panels each comprise terminal crotch edges that are longitudinally spaced apart, and wherein said at least said longitudinally extending location comprises at least one longitudinally extending first location and at least one longitudinally extending second location, [and] wherein said absorbent composite is connected to said first body panel along said at least one longitudinally extending first location, and wherein said absorbent composite is connected to said second body panel along said at least one longitudinally extending second location, and wherein said side margin extends laterally outboard from each of said first and

second locations.

3. (Amended) The [invention] absorbent garment of claim 2 wherein said first body panel comprises a first pair of side body panels and wherein said second body panel comprises a second pair of side body panels, wherein each of said side body panels comprises an outboard terminal edge and an inboard terminal edge, wherein said at least one first location comprises a pair of first locations and wherein said at least one second location comprises a pair of second locations, and wherein said inboard terminal edges of each of said first pair of side body panels is attached to said absorbent composite at one of said pairs of said first locations respectively and wherein said inboard terminal edge of each of said second pair of side body panels is attached to said absorbent composite at one of said pairs of said second locations, and wherein said absorbent composite comprises opposite side margins extending laterally outboard from each of said first and second locations.

4. (Amended) The [invention] absorbent garment of claim 1 wherein said side margin is formed from said backsheet.

5. (Amended) The [invention] absorbent garment of claim 1 wherein said side margin is formed from said topsheet.

6. (Amended) The [invention] absorbent garment of claim 5 wherein side margin comprises a first portion of said topsheet folded over a second portion of said topsheet, wherein said folded first and second portions form a folded edge defining said free edge of said side margin.

7. (Amended) The [invention] absorbent garment of claim 6 wherein said side margin further comprises a portion of said backsheet disposed between said first and

second portions of said topsheet.

8. (Amended) The [invention] absorbent garment of claim 1 wherein said side margin is formed from said topsheet and said backsheet.

9. (Amended) The [invention] absorbent garment of claim 1 wherein said retention portion has opposite lateral side edges, and wherein side margin extends laterally outboard from one of said side edges of said retention portion.

10. (Amended) The [invention] absorbent garment of claim 1 wherein said side margin comprises a longitudinally extending elastic element.

11. (Amended) The [invention] absorbent garment of claim 1 wherein said side margin of said absorbent composite comprises opposite side margins extending laterally outboard on each side of said absorbent composite and terminating in opposite free edges.

12. (Amended) The [invention] absorbent garment of claim 1 wherein said location is laterally spaced a first distance from said free edge at a first position and wherein said location is laterally spaced a second distance from said free edge at a second position, wherein said first distance is greater than said second distance and wherein said first and second positions are longitudinally spaced.

13. (Amended) The [invention] absorbent garment of claim 12 wherein said second position is closer to an end of said absorbent composite than said first position.

14. (Amended) An absorbent garment comprising:

[a] longitudinally spaced first and second body [panel] panels each having a

bodyside surface, terminal waist edges and spaced apart terminal crotch edges; and
an absorbent composite having a longitudinally extending length, a laterally extending width and longitudinally opposed first and second end regions, said absorbent composite comprising a backsheet, a topsheet and a retention portion disposed between said backsheet and said topsheet, wherein said first end region of said absorbent composite is connected to said bodyside surface of said first body panel along at least one longitudinally extending first location and wherein said second end region of said absorbent composite is connected to said bodyside surface of said second body panel along at least one longitudinally extending second location, wherein said absorbent composite comprises a pair of laterally opposed side margins extending laterally outboard from each of said at least one first and second locations and terminating in opposite outboard free edges, wherein said side margins are not attached to said first and second body panels.

15. (Amended) The [invention] absorbent garment of claim 14 wherein said first body panel comprises a first pair of side body panels and wherein said second body panel comprises a second pair of side body panels, wherein each of said side body panels comprises an outboard terminal edge and an inboard terminal edge, wherein said inboard terminal edge is connected to said absorbent composite.

16. (Twice Amended) The [invention] absorbent garment of claim 14 wherein said side margins are formed from said backsheet.

17. (Twice Amended) The [invention] absorbent garment of claim 14 wherein said side margins are formed from said topsheet.

18. (Twice Amended) The [invention] absorbent garment of claim 17 wherein each of said side margins comprises a first portion of said topsheet folded over a second

portion of said topsheet, wherein said folded first and second portions form a folded edge defining said free edge of said each of said side margins.

19. (Twice Amended) The [invention] absorbent garment of claim 18 wherein said each of said side margins further comprises a portion of said backsheet disposed between said first and second portions of said topsheet.

20. (Twice Amended) The [invention] absorbent garment of claim 14 wherein said side margins are formed from said topsheet and said backsheet.

21. (Amended) The [invention] absorbent garment of claim 14 wherein said retention portion has opposite lateral side edges, and wherein side margins extend laterally outboard from said side edges of said retention portion, respectively.

22. (Amended) The [invention] absorbent garment of claim 14 wherein said side margins each comprise a longitudinally extending elastic element.

23. (Twice Amended) The [invention] absorbent garment of claim 14 wherein each of said side margins has a first lateral width at a first position and a second lateral width at a second position, wherein said first and second positions are longitudinally spaced.

24. (Amended) A method of providing protection against bodily exudates with an absorbent garment comprising:

providing said absorbent garment comprising [a] first and second body [panel] panels each having a bodyside surface, terminal waist edges and longitudinally spaced terminal crotch edges defining a space therebetween and an absorbent composite having a longitudinally extending length and a laterally

extending width and comprising a backsheet, a topsheet and a retention portion disposed between said backsheet and said topsheet, wherein said absorbent composite bridges said space between said terminal crotch edges and is connected to said bodyside surface of each of said first and second [said] body [panel and] panels along at least one longitudinally extending first and second location respectively, wherein said absorbent composite comprises laterally opposed side margins extending laterally outboard from at least one of said at least one first and second locations and each of said side margins terminating in a free edge, wherein said side margins are not attached to said respective first and second body [panel] panels; and applying said absorbent garment to a body of a user.

25. (Amended) The method of claim 24 wherein at least said side margins of said absorbent composite [has] have a bodyside surface and wherein at least a portion of said bodyside surface of said side margins is in contact with the body of the user.

26. (Amended) The [invention] method of claim 24 wherein said side margins are formed from said backsheet.

27. (Amended) The [invention] method of claim 24 wherein said side margins are formed from said topsheet.

28. (Amended) The [invention] method of claim 27 wherein each of said side margins comprises a first portion of said topsheet folded over a second portion of said topsheet, wherein said folded first and second portions form a folded edge defining said free edge of said side margin.

29. (Amended) The [invention] method of claim 28 wherein each of said side margins further comprises a portion of said backsheet disposed between said first

and second portions of said topsheet.

30. (Amended) The [invention] method of claim 24 wherein said side [margin is] margins are formed from said topsheet and said backsheet.

31. (Amended) The [invention] method of claim 24 wherein said retention portion has opposite lateral side edges, and wherein side margins extend laterally outboard from said side edges of said retention portion, respectively.

32. (Amended) The [invention] method of claim 24 wherein said side margins each comprise a longitudinally extending elastic element.

33. (Twice Amended) The [invention] absorbent garment of claim 1 wherein said absorbent composite comprises an end region overlapping said body panel, and wherein said side margin extends along only a portion of said end region of said absorbent composite overlapping said body panel.

34. (Amended) The [invention] absorbent garment of claim 10 wherein said elastic element extends along only a portion of said length of said absorbent composite.

35. (Amended) The [invention] absorbent garment of claim 34 wherein said elastic element has a length between about 5% and about 100% of said length of said absorbent composite.

36. (Amended) The [invention] absorbent garment of claim 13 wherein said second distance is about zero.

37. (Amended) The [invention] absorbent garment of claim 36 wherein said side

margin is tapered from said second distance to said first distance between said second and first positions.

38. (Amended) The [invention] absorbent garment of claim 14 wherein said first and second end regions overlap said first and second body panels respectively, and wherein said side margins extend along only a portion of said first and second end regions of said absorbent composite overlapping said first and second body panels respectively.

39. (Amended) The [invention] absorbent garment of claim 14 wherein each of said first and second end regions comprise opposite corners, and wherein at least said opposite corners of said first and second end regions are connected to said first and second body panels respectively.

40. (Amended) The [invention] absorbent garment of claim 22 wherein each of said elastic [element] elements extends along only a portion of said length of said absorbent composite.

41. (Amended) The [invention] absorbent garment of claim 40 wherein each of said elastic [element] elements has a length between about 5% and about 100% of said length of said absorbent composite.

42. (Amended) The [invention] absorbent garment of claim 23 wherein said second lateral width is about zero at said second position.

43. (Twice Amended) The [invention] absorbent garment of claim 24 wherein said absorbent composite comprises an end region overlapping said body panel, and wherein said side margins extend along only a portion of said end region of said

absorbent composite overlapping said body panel.

44. (Amended) The [invention] absorbent garment of claim 32 wherein each of said elastic [element] elements extends along only a portion of said length of said absorbent composite.

45. (Amended) The [invention] absorbent garment of claim 44 wherein each of said elastic [element] elements has a length between about 5% and about 100% of said length of said absorbent composite.

46. (Amended) The [invention] absorbent garment of claim 24 wherein said absorbent composite comprises at least a pair of opposite corners connected to said bodyside surface of said body panel.